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THE RIVER SHANNON.

WE extract the following facts, relative to this river, from a pamphlet, published by C. W. Williams, Esq. It demonstrates what might be done by *improvements* in Ireland :

"The river Shannon, unequalled in the British empire, embraces 234 miles of continuous navigation ; and, from the circumstance of its running through the centre of the kingdom, may be compared, for the purposes of intercourse, to *double that length of coast*. The advantages of water conveyance are thus presented to an extent of country equal to the whole line of coast between Belfast and Cork ; or to more than the entire eastern coast of England.

"The great feature of this extraordinary river is its diversified character. For a distance of 60 miles from the sea to the city of Limerick, it presents a magnificent estuary and tide way, without bar or other impediment whatever, and with a flood equal to a height of 20 feet at the city quays. This part of the river possesses several deep bays or inlets, and receives the waters of several rivers, some of which enjoy the tide-way for a considerable distance up their channels, and all susceptible of great improvement. By these, the benefit of water conveyance may be extended to many rising towns, and to extensive, rich, populous, and, we may add, *disturbed* districts.

"The great estuary of the Fergus, extending 10 miles to the town of Clare, with the means of extension to Ennis, the capital of the county of Clare, here pushes the benefit of navigation into the centre of a district unrivalled, perhaps, in Britain, for depth and fertility of soil.

"Above Limerick to Killaloe the navigation is varied, being part still water and part river.

"From Killaloe, in the county of Clare, to its source in the county of Leitrim, the river assumes a great variety of character. In some places it stretches out into seas or lakes, two of which, Lough Derg and Lough Rea, are above 20 British miles long each. In other parts, the river assimilates itself more to that of the river navigations of England, with the combined advantages of sailing and tracking, as seen in the Thames, the Mersey, and the Severn. In other parts, it forms a succession of small lakes, peculiarly in want of artificial helps, which, however, the use of steam navigation would completely overcome ; and, lastly, in many situations, it approaches almost to still-water navigation. The falls and rapids, which on the whole river amount to an elevation of 146 feet 10 inches, are overcome by lateral canals and locks. Throughout its course, however, it possesses the rare quality of having a sufficient depth of water for all the purposes of internal intercourse. From this diversity of character, it is manifest how much its navigation is open to improvements by the removal of difficulties and obstructions :—the adding trackways ; constructing small harbours, quays, and landing places, and making approaches to the same ; widening and raising arches of bridges ; establishing beacons and other guides to aid the navigator through the intricacy and windings of its channels, and in seasons when the water extends beyond its natural course : the cutting the banks, and deepening many parts, and on the whole, affording abundant opportunities for the application of human skill and judgment.

"In all these respects, notwithstanding the sums which have been expended on it, during the last century, the Shannon, with such unquestionable latent resources, presents a lamentable picture of great neglect—great misapplication of power—great ignorance of its resources—great want of enterprise, and even worldly wisdom, on the part of its natural protectors and patrons, the owners of the towns and villages and the soil, in its vicinity, and throughout its entire course.

"The Shannon washes the shores of 10 counties out of 32, viz. Leitrim, Roscommon, Longford, Westmeath, King's-County, Galway, Tipperary, Clare, Limerick, and Kerry. All of these are abundant in population, and susceptible of receiving great extension and improvement in their agriculture ; and although many of them are periodically exposed to the greatest distress, and even famine, yet are without the power of mutual relief or co-operation.

"Taking then the double length of coast which the ten counties present to the navigation, at 500 miles ; and which, considering the extent of the bays, inlets and rivers, is under the fact ; it leaves an average of 50 miles of coast to each county. This fact alone is sufficiently indicative of what may be done through the instrumentality of this *one river*.

"Running from North to South, the several counties on the Shannon naturally present great diversity of soil, and even climate. Some of the counties are mountainous, with deep productive valleys, on which may be cheaply fed vast quantities of sheep and cattle. Other countries are flat and humid, yet susceptible of great amelioration from the labour of their population, under the guidance of skill and capital. Several with soils on a substratum of limestone, are in all seasons warm and dry, and peculiarly adapted to the production of the finest qualities of grain and other produce ; while some to the southward, possess deep and tenacious soils, requiring strong manures and much labouring.

"Under such circumstances it is evident that the several parts of this great territory must be variously affected by the seasons. Wet seasons are beneficial to some and almost ruinous to others. Some are abundant in seasons of drought which bring scarcity and even famine to others. Some divisions of counties on the Shannon are well adapted for descriptions of produce which are unattainable in others. Some excel in wheat and potatoes ; others in barley, oats, and rape ; while their neighbours are better adapted to *pasturage*.

"*Natural manures* also, those essential in agricultural districts, are not only excellent, but equal to any demand throughout a great portion of the river, yet unknown in the rest. The black and white marls of the Shannon, which are easily raised, and accessible and free to all, are among the most bountiful gifts of Nature to this extraordinary country.

"Again, *turf*, that prime necessary of life in Ireland, is abundant in the greater number of districts on the Shannon, yet deficient or inferior in quality in many. Building materials, as stone, sand, lime, flags, bricks, slates, and marble, are cheap and abundant in many, while frequently the adjoining counties are wholly without them.

"The *bogs* on both sides of the Shannon contiguous to the line of the Grand Canal between Ballinasloe and Tullamore, may be noticed as illustrative of their improveable value. There, bog-land, originally of no value, now lets freely at 30s. an acre. In many parts of the Shannon and over districts of from five to ten miles long, the deep rich callows, annually submerged by the rising waters of the Shannon, produce abundant crops of *hay*, yet in other and easily approached parts, and in many towns on its banks, hay is extremely scarce and dear.

"Of the *reclaimable bogs*, callows, and marsh lands, it is unnecessary to say more than that in no part of Ireland are they more extensive, or more within the reach of human means for improvement. The evidence of Mullins before the committee, and the report of Mr. Grantham in his survey of the Shannon, are conclusive on this head.

"In a country then so extensive ; so variable in soil and climate ; so various in produce and natural products ; can there be a question of the importance of interchange, particularly for bulky commodities ? It is not an unnatural state of things that in such a country, and with such a river flowing through its centre, some districts should be in want not merely of comforts and conveniences, but of the *common necessities of life, food and fuel*, and almost approaching to famine ; while adjoining districts on the same river have them in *abundance and to spare*.

"How then can we convey to English eyes the picture of the Shannon through its great course. Let us suppose a navigable river taking its rise in some distant county in England as far as from Liverpool as Essex or Middlesex. Suppose it occasionally spreading itself into noble and picturesque sheets of water, of more than 20 miles in length, with numerous islands, receiving the waters of many rivers, and stretching its bays into the adjacent counties, as it were to increase the measure of its utility and beauty. See it winding its way through Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, and the rich soil of Leicestershire, and after passing by Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, falling into the estuary of the Mersey, in Lancashire. See it presenting to each of these counties the benefit of 50 miles of navigation, and we shall have a correct view of the extent and capabilities of this river.

"But how shall we describe the state in which it has remained for ages as to trading intercourse, and in which one half of it remains to this very hour, absolutely wanting in all the incidents of navigation. For nearly 100 miles of its length, not a sail or boat is to be met with on its waters. No appearance of utility ; no indications of industry or capital ;

even its beauties unknown. Deficient to an extent scarcely credible in roads and approaches to it, and consequently having but little connexion with the interior, where Nature designed its influence should extend. Without any employment of its waters, it flows unheeded by, and unproductive of any good. Over many of its districts of great extent, from the absence of that control which human skill and means could have effected, its waters have become a source of wide-spreading waste."

SERENADE.

(ORIGINAL.)

The sun has set,
Day lingers yet,
The red-moss rose is weeping;
And lone and still
O'er the distant hill
The yellow moon is peeping.

'Tis calm as death,
Save the balmy breath
Of the breeze o'er night flowers stealing;
While the star of love
Is seen above
Thro' fleecy white clouds sailing.

List! Marian, dear,
Thy lover's near,
'Tis his guitar that's sounding;
To mark thine eye,
To hear thee sigh,
His heart with hope is bounding!

But if in dreams
Thy lover seems
In raptures to adore thee,
Sleep, Marian, sleep,
Whilst I shall keep
My silent vigils o'er thee!

On thy pure breast
May balmy rest
Fall, sweet as fairy numbers;
Marian, good night,
'Till morning's light
May angels guard thy slumbers!

H. K.

THE ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY HOUSE,

KILDARE STREET.

The Dublin Society originated in the year 1731, in the private meetings of a few eminent men, and was supported solely by their subscriptions for eighteen years. It received a charter from George II. and has been liberally supported by various annual grants from Parliament, although latterly it has shared a diminution of income, along with every other society in Ireland.

In the year 1815, the splendid mansion of the Duke of Lienster in Kildare street was purchased by the society for £20,000. This noble building is worthy of the purposes for which it is assigned. A gateway of rustic masonry leads from Kildare street into a spacious court, forming an immense segment of a circle before the principal front, which is 140 feet long by 70 deep. The Hall is spacious and lofty, and contains a number of statues, of which a description will be given when we come to Sculpture. Our object at present is at once to enter the Museum, which is thrown open to the public every Monday and Friday, from 12 to three o'clock; though at present it is partially closed on account of the prevalence of cholera.

The civility and politeness of the Museum keeper must be extremely gratifying to every stranger who visits the rooms. Every thing worthy of attention is explained, nay, expatiated on; and you feel quite at ease in listening to an individual, when conscious that *no fee* is expected, and that *he* is not measuring his descriptions by the conjectural length of *your* purse. It renders one *happy* in wandering amid the various and *multifarious* objects with which the rooms are garnished--you can walk from bird to beast, and from beast to reptile, and from reptile to shells, minerals, monstrosities, every thing

rich and rare, ever thing wonderful, curious, and incomprehensible--without an abridgment of the happiness enjoyed. And what a fund of materials are here, for meditation and reflection! Butterflies, beetles, and bats--mummies from Egypt and tattooed heads from New Zealand--Greenland huts and Arabian rocks--boa constrictors and birds of Paradise--earth, sea, and air have given out their treasures--the torrid and the frigid zones have contributed to enrich the Museum. But it would be a vain attempt to give a general description, in *one* article, of the various objects to be seen at the rooms. It would just be similar to one hurried visit, of which no permanent impression is left upon the mind. The objects to be seen are too numerous to be remembered with any degree of precision; and the unpractised visitor should endeavour to go as often as he can, to fix his attention on a few objects at a time, and endeavour to classify in his mind whatever may be worthy of particular observation; and thus will his ideas be concentrated--his knowledge extended and improved. After the same plan will we proceed, and selecting remarkable and particular objects, present them from time to time to our readers.

The object which first arrests observation on entering, is the magnificent skeleton of the FOSSIL DEER, standing in the centre of the room.



This splendid relic of the former grandeur of the animal kingdom, was dug up at Rathcannon, near Limerick, and presented to the Dublin Society by Archdeacon Maunsel. It is perfect in every single bone of the frame work which contributes to form a part of its general outline; and surmounted by the head and beautifully expanded antlers, which extend out to a distance of SIX FEET on either side, it is calculated to excite the most elevated ideas of its majestic appearance; and when the reader recollects that from the ground to the highest point of the tip of the antler is TEN FEET, FOUR INCHES, and that from the end of the nose to the tip of the tail, it is TEN FEET, TEN INCHES, his imagination will most naturally be carried back to the time when whole herds of this noble animal ranged over the country; and when we contrast it with the Lilliputian things that skip in the Phoenix Park, an involuntary regret will arise in the mind that the race should be so totally extinct.

When and where, did this gigantic species of deer exist? Such is the question which arises at once to every man's mind--yet nothing but mere conjecture can be given in reply. No tradition of its actual existence remains: yet so frequently are bones and antlers of enormous size dug up in the various parts of the island, that the peasantry are acquainted with them as the "old deer" and in some places these remains are so numerous and so frequent that they are often thrown aside as useless lumber. A pair of these antlers were used as a field gate near Tipperary. Another pair had been used for a similar purpose near Newcastle, in the county of Wicklow, until they were decomposed by the action of the weather. There is also a specimen in Charlemont House, the town residence of the Earl of Charlemont, which is said to have been used for some time as a temporary bridge across a rivulet in the county Tyrone. Now, though similar remains have